

2009
Spring Wellness Walk



PREVENTION PARTNERS

The State Health Plan Prevention Partners

Presents its Annual

Spring Wellness Walk

April 3, 2009
Rain Date April 6, 2009

It's time to begin planning for this year's Spring Wellness Walk! This information packet includes materials and ideas that will help you plan, promote and implement a spring walk at your agency, organization or school.

This year's event will take place on *Friday, April 3, 2009*. In the event of rain, the walk will be held *Monday, April 6, 2009*. However, **YOU** can choose a walk date of your choice to suit your worksite's schedule. The annual Spring Wellness Walk is designed to create an awareness of the importance of staying physically active, make fitness fun and give your wellness committee visibility. *Remember, you are not limited to focusing the day's activities on a fitness walk.* Any activity that is centered around employee health and fitness and encourages everyone to participate will fulfill the objectives of hosting an employee wellness day. The goal is to plan an activity that will increase employee morale while making fitness an enjoyable activity for the entire staff!

Enclosed you will find:

1. Planning strategies: a general guide to planning your event;
2. Suggestions and ideas: creative incentives and activities;
3. A form letter from the director or principal of your agency or school that invites participation and personalizes your event; and
4. Materials order form.

The enclosed materials are ideas and suggestions that have been successfully used by other agencies and organizations. Prevention Partners encourages you to be as creative as you like.

Planning Strategies

The Spring Wellness Walk is planned for *Friday, April 3, 2009*. We would like all of our worksites to participate on this day. If, however, office priorities conflict with this scheduled date, you may plan your event for a more convenient date.

This is a general guide to planning a successful day of events to celebrate the 2009 Spring Wellness Walk. Please contact Diane Conte at 803-737-3822 if you have any questions regarding this event.

This year's walk logo can be seen on the front cover of this packet. This cover art also serves as the poster art. You can order free posters to help you to promote your walk. You will find an order form on the last page of this packet. Please indicate the number of Spring Wellness Walk T-shirts, certificates, and additional posters you will need. Posters and certificates are FREE. The T-shirts are \$8.00 each (the price includes the tax). **You must return your order forms by March 23, 2009.**

Please display posters prior to the event with the time, date, location and a name and telephone number to contact for more information. Be sure to give people plenty of time to plan!

Meet with your wellness committee a few weeks ahead of time to plan what you will do that day. Organize your event with other agencies or schools.

Draft a memo from your director announcing the event and encouraging participation in the walk. See the memo on Page 6.

Call area restaurants, stores and theaters for donations and gift certificates to be given away in a raffle. Create flyers publicizing the sponsors for the walk and post them around your office.

Have a sign-up sheet for those participating in the walk.

Suggestions and Ideas

The following is a list of suggestions and ideas from the Prevention Partners staff and many volunteer worksite coordinators from across the state. You may use one or more of these ideas to add to your existing walk, or you can plan a whole new event around health and fitness for your co-workers. The purpose is to incorporate fitness into a day of fun. Anything that will increase participation and bring your office together will improve employee wellness at work and at home.

Dress code and participation time

Ask for a relaxed dress code that day and/or an extended lunch hour to give your employees more time to be involved in a Spring Wellness Walk.

Suggestions and Ideas –continued

Offer a FREE raffle for participation

Any raffle or give-away will increase participation. Buy or create raffle tickets. Have your wellness committee distribute the tickets around the office before the walk, being sure to let people know they are valid only if they participate. Collect the ticket stubs at the walk and raffle off the prizes after the walk or at an afternoon break.

Door prizes

Obtain a variety of door prizes from local merchants who are willing to support your health program for a little free promotion! Announce the winners after the walk or during an afternoon break for those who participated. Spring Wellness Walk T-shirts (\$8.00) serve as great door prizes and may be purchased from our office by mailing a completed order form with payment.

Healthy snacks

If possible, have juice or water and/or a healthy snack for all participating walkers. Not only will this increase participation, but also it will give your co-workers some energy to finish the day. As mentioned under Planning Strategies, many local organizations are willing to donate such items. Give them a call!

Certificates

Order enough certificates from our office for everyone who participates (walkers, volunteers and any other individuals who participate).

“Challenge”

Order the “Challenge” program to implement a month-long incentive point program for a health and fitness activity. Incentive programs are free and can also be downloaded from our Web site. Go to www.eip.sc.gov then click on Prevention Partners, then “Coordinator Tools and Support.” All the Incentive programs are listed.

Health Promotions

Promote a “Lunch Bunch” or “Happy Hour” group of walkers. The individual or team that walks the most miles during the week or month can be recognized at an awards ceremony following the walk.

If you use pedometers, your participant can count the steps they have taken over the whole week or even the whole month. The goal should be 10,000/day – a real challenge!

Pedometers can also be ordered from our office – see the “Order Form” on the last page of this packet.

Plan a week of activities ending with the walk

This can include a heart healthy employee lunch, daily health and fitness tips and facts, workshops or seminars on topics important to your co-workers, guest speakers (maybe you have an expert among your friends or co-workers), etc. You could even promote the walk as a kickoff for the “Challenge” program.

Suggestions and Ideas – continued

Health Information

Provide health information or make it available during the week of the event. Many associations and organizations like the American Heart Association, American Cancer Society, American Diabetes Association, American Lung Association and Mothers Against Drunk Driving provide free literature and information. Host a health fair on the day of the event and invite those agencies to participate.

Variety

Provide 1-mile, 2-mile and 5-mile routes for varying fitness levels. Encourage participants to walk, run or rollerblade the route. The more creative, the better.

Acknowledgement

For each employee participating, give a special item to acknowledge his or her involvement (a cup, a pencil, a pin, a “goody bag,” certificate, etc).

Encouragement

Encourage your co-workers to form teams and invite their families (husbands, wives, parents and children) to join in on the fun. Offer a prize for the team that walks the most miles.

Getting Organized

1-3 Weeks Prior to the Day of the Event

Supplies other than those provided by Prevention Partners such as streamers, prizes, etc., should be obtained before the week of the event. This includes those items used for contests or other activities your group might be planning.

Secure volunteers, speakers and/or entertainment. Inform them of the specific time and place in writing if necessary.

1 Week to One Day Prior to the Day of the Event

Send out memos, especially to the volunteers, as a reminder.

Locate and/or reserve chairs, tables, clipboards, etc., for the event.

Prepare as much as possible in advance because you'll have enough to do the day of the event.

Day of the Event

Festive Arrangements

Decorate your office or agency with balloons, streamers and posters to create a festive atmosphere.

Registration

Have a registration table to determine who participated in the walk. Registration slips can be used for random drawings to give away the gift certificates and other donations. (You also can hold pre-registration prior to the event day to encourage even more participation!)

Volunteers

Have plenty of volunteers available on the event day to help collect registrations, work at the snack/beverage table, be stationed along the walk route, take pictures and answer questions. Remember to send thank you notes to your volunteers.

Prizes

Give your administrator/principal or an important community member the honor of choosing and awarding the door prizes or raffle drawing winners.

Pictures

Take pictures of the event and then display them on a bulletin board for everyone to see. You can offer the pictures to your co-workers as souvenirs.

Alternative Participation

Those who don't wish to or are unable to participate in the walk can participate by cheering on fellow co-workers or volunteering to give out snacks and water at the finish line.

Contests

Have a hat contest with awards going to the most creative, the most bizarre, the ugliest, the prettiest, etc.

Entertainment

Demonstration groups are a great way to increase interest. Examples include demonstrating country line dancing, shag dancing, western square dancing, clogging, aerobic dancing and ballroom dancing. Include music or singing. Invite local radio stations or bands (including area high school bands) to come and provide music entertainment. Also, a co-worker with a portable radio/stereo can "DJ" the event.

Speakers

Have a special speaker or community celebrity speak before or after the walk.

Aerobics

Hold a low-impact aerobics class or a group aerobic warm-up preceding the event.

Try Something New and Different

Give your co-workers an option. Let them walk, ride or roll. The participants can decide how to complete the course - walk, run, roller-skate, rollerblade, ride a bike, etc.

Take a historical walking tour of your community or a guided nature walk through a park.

Try hosting a scavenger hunt.

Have a staff bowling, basketball, golf, canoeing or walking tournament.

Provide games such as Twister, Jeopardy and Trivial Pursuit.

Host a “Walk-A-Thon” and at the end of the walk have a bag lunch waiting for the participants. You can ask co-workers to bring in healthy sandwiches, snacks and beverages, or ask area restaurants and bakeries to donate food for your event.

Invite canine companions. Have a hilarious contest to see who looks most like their dog. Be sure to take pictures to post on the bulletin board at work.

Use your wellness committee to help reduce the workload. They can help you plan, promote and host the event. Also, find out if there are any community resources in your area that are available free-of-charge. We have found that many restaurants, stores, theaters, gyms and other organizations are willing to donate their time and products to a good cause. Don't be afraid to ask your co-workers to help you plan or get donations for the event. After all, this event is for them! Be creative! And most of all, HAVE FUN!

SAMPLE MEMORANDUM

TO: All Employees at your Organization, Agency or School

FROM: Your Director

DATE: Today's Date

RE: Prevention Partners Spring Wellness Walk

I want to invite you to join The State Health Plan Prevention Partners in its annual Spring Wellness Walk. This year's walk has been scheduled for **Friday, April 3, 2009**. I encourage you to join your fellow workers in what promises to be a motivating and rewarding event.

Your participation is an investment in a healthier, brighter future for yourself, friends and family. So come on out and join in the fun!

**Prevention Partners - Spring Wellness Walk - Friday April 3, 2009
Materials Order Form**

Coordinator's Name _____

Agency/School Name _____

Agency/School Address _____

Work Telephone _____ **E-mail** _____

Spring Wellness Walk Poster	FREE	FREE	FREE
Prevention Partners Participant Certificates	FREE	FREE	FREE
Prevention Partners "Challenge" Program	ONLINE	ONLINE	ONLINE

NOTE: The "Challenge" Incentive program can be downloaded from www.eip.sc.gov.
Click on "Prevention Partners" then, "Coordinator Tools and Support," then scroll down to "Work Incentive Programs."

Pedometers: \$3.60 (includes tax)

<u>AMOUNT NEEDED</u>	<u>TOTAL COST</u>
_____	_____

T-shirts: \$8.00 (includes tax)

**Maroon, short-sleeve T-shirt with the same logo as the walk poster. Adult sizes only.
100 percent cotton.**

<u>SIZE</u>	<u>AMOUNT NEEDED</u>	<u>TOTAL COST</u>
M (38-40)	_____	_____
L (42-44)	_____	_____
XL (46-48)	_____	_____
XXL (50-52)	_____	_____

GRAND TOTAL	_____	_____
(Tax is already included)		

• Please make checks or money orders payable to the Employee Insurance Program.
NO CASH OR PURCHASE ORDERS ACCEPTED.

• Return to ATTN: Spring Wellness Walk Materials Orders
Prevention Partners, Employee Insurance Program, 1201 Main Street, Suite 300, Columbia, SC 29201.
YOU MUST RETURN YOUR ORDER FORMS BY MARCH 23, 2009.